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ABSTRACT

Dropout rates had increased for 2 years at a suburban public high school with approximately 2,200 students. Recent legislation mandating increased credit requirements, more academic schedules and standards, and mandatory attendance requirements has contributed to an increase in the dropout rate. A dropout intervention program was implemented with the goals of identifying potential dropouts and through the intervention activities to decrease the percentage of actual dropouts. Potential dropouts (N=638) were classified into three problem categories: academic (N=264), attendance (N=328), and behavioral (N=46). Parental involvement was requested, students were interviewed, and activities were recommended based on needs of the student. Results indicated the dropout rate decreased from 6.7 percent to 5.2 percent for an overall reduction of 1.5 percent. The evaluation questionnaire responses of the students indicated the program was indeed helpful, with over 66 percent claiming the academic activities assisted them most. The most frequent comment by the students was to suggest offering more alternatives to making up lost credits. Dropout rates will continue to be monitored over the next few years as the program is refined. Motivating factors will continue to be examined in an effort to prevent as many dropouts as possible. (ABL)

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COMPREHENSIVE DESIGN FOR THE INTERVENTION AND REDUCTION OF DROPOUT RATES

BY

HARRY MICHAEL HARGIS

A Practicum Report
submitted to the faculty of the Center for the Advancement
of Education of Nova University in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

June 1986

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ABSTRACT

A model program to meet the needs of potential dropout students experiencing difficulty in academic, attentance, or behavioral areas.
Hargis, Harry Michael, 1986: Practicum report, Nova University, Center for the Advancement of Education
Descriptors: Attendance/Discipline Problems/Dropout/High School/Secondary Education/Truancy

The author developed and implemeted a dropout intervention program for high school students. The aims of the program were to identify potential dropouts, and through intervention activities decrease the percentage of actual dropouts.

Students were classified into three problem categories--academic, attendance, and behavioral. Parental involvement was requested, students were interviewed, and activities were recommended based on needs of the student. Results indicated the dropout rate decreased and the evaluative questionaire by the students indicated the program was indeed helpful. (Appendices include copies of the Evaluation Report which includes the student questionaire).

Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. Where it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other workers in the field and in the hope that my own work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

Harry Michael Hargis

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OBSERVER VERIFICATION FORM

Verification of Practicum Activity

Dear Observer:

Practicum students in Nova's M.S. and Ed.S. programs are asked to provide external verification that the project activities reported in their final practicum documents took place as described. You have been designated an observer to fulfill this confirmation function by the student named below. On this sheet, then, please write a note attesting to your knowledge of the project activity described in the final practicum report to which this will be attached. (Note that you are not asked to evaluate, or make judgments about the quality of the project.)

It is to my knowledge that the following program and the elements of the program were implemented at this school.

Practicum Title A COMPREHENSIVE DESIGN FOR THE INTERVENTION AND REDUCTION OF DROP-OUT RATES

Student's Name HARRY MICHAEL HARGIS

Program Site ORLANDO Date

Observer's Name CAROL SUTTON Carol Sutton
(please print ----------and sign)

Observer's position Assistant Principal

Purpose

Background

This study was conducted in a public high school located in a suburban central Florida community. The school had approximately 2200 students, grades 9 through 12. There were 117 full-time and 2 part-time instructional staff members. There were 7 administrators and 7 guidance counselors. Thirty-seven percent had advanced degrees and 63% had bachelor's degrees.

The school's population consisted of approximately 92% white, 3% black, and 5% Asian, Hispanic, and other minorities. The school and community were experiencing a state of rapid growth which was expected to continue well into the 1980's.

The majority of male parents were involved in managerial, military, skilled, or professional careers. Employed females were mainly in clerical and managerial positions. Three out of four parents had education beyond high school. About half the parents had attended some degree of college, while about 25% had bachelor's degrees and 15% received advanced degrees. The average income was in excess of $30,000 per year.

The school had an academically oriented curriculum based on 68% of the graduating seniors enrolling in college programs. Seventeen percent attended vocational/technical shcools with the remaining 15% divided between military, employment, and other areas.

The community was highly tourist oriented. Therefore, there was an almost unlimited variety of parks and recreational facilities available. Much of the local business was technical, retail, service or food related with very little industrial income. Numerous sites were available for post high school training. Examples included the community college, university, and technical, vocational, and business schools.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Dropout rates have significantly increased in the past two years at this particular school. Recent legislation mandating increased credit requirements, more academic schedules and standards, and mandatory attendance requirements have contributed to an increase in the dropout rate.

Quitting school is the result of a complex set of factors which can be summarized into two common themes: those factors within the school which create student dissatisfaction and alienation leading to a feeling of being "forced out," and those forces outside the school which pull students away from school.

Dropout rates in this particular school averaged 4.2% from 1979 to 1983. In this five year span the highest dropout rate was 5.3% and the lowest was 3.2% for any given year. In the post Raise Bill years, 1984 and 1985, the average dropout rate has been 6.7% for an overall increase of 2.5% annually.

Dropout rates at this particular school have received little attention due to several factors including socio-economic background,

family expectations, test scores, and curriculum design. Organized efforts by the guidance department have centered on career awareness programs, individual counseling based on teacher referral, and peer counseling groups. There had been no formal definition of "potential dropout" or any systematic effort to subject any targeted group to proper reinforcement programs.

The previous dropout procedure began with the student's requesting an exit form from the registrar's office. Name, address, phone number, and schedule were listed as well as guardian notification. The student went to each of his classroom teachers, the librarian, bookkeeper, and occupational specialist to receive withdrawal clearance. The occupational specialist requested an exit interview, during which a questionnaire regarding future plans and problems encountered in school was completed. The student signed the questionnaire and the occupational specialist signed the withdrawal form and sent the student to guidance for final clearance. Guidance then withdrew students from school and accepted any forwarding information needed to complete the process.

OUTCOME STATEMENT

The Occupational Specialist evaluated the program effectiveness at the end of the study. The study was evaluated over a ten (10) week period by the comparison of pre-intervention dropout percentages against post-intervention dropout percentages. Temporary success

was statistically measured by comparison of the dropout percentages, but overall success or failure had to be determined over a longer observation period. Also, the impact on the target group was to remain in high school until graduation.

A program was established with a goal of reducing dropout rates in this particular school. The writer who was program coordinator was responsible for the establishment, implementation, and follow-up of the program.

To institute a dropout intervention porgram, it was necessary to define and identify "potential dropouts." There were numerous specific reasons why dropouts occurred, but some common categories could be gleaned. Attendance, academic, and behavorial problems all served the general purpose that was required to identify potential dropouts.

Students who met the following criteria for any of of the categories listed below were classified as a potential dropout.

ACADEMIC STATUS- Students had to earn 24 credits to graduate, or 6 credits per year. Any student that fell 2 or more credits behind their projected credit status was classified as a potential dropout.

GRADE	SCHEDULED CREDITS	POTENTIAL DROPOUTS
9th	3 credits (mid-year)	2 credits or less
10th	6 credits	4 credits or less
11th	12 credits	10 credits or less
12th	18 credits	16 credits or less

ATTENDANCE STATUS - Students that fell below 75% attendance and/or had multiple loss of credit reports filed with the registrar's office were classified as potential dropouts. Status reviews were maintained each quarter with exit reviews each semester.

Example: State law required 180 hours in the classroom, with 135 hours minimum mandatory attendance per year. Each student had to complete a minimum of 67.5 hours in classroom attendance each semester or be classified as a potential dropout.

Example: Upon the 7th unexcused absence a letter of notification was sent to the student's home warning that loss of credit would occur upon the 9th unexcused absence. Any student that was in danger of losing credit in 2 or more classes was classified as a potential dropout.

BEHAVORIAL STATUS - Students subjected to "In-School" or "Out-of-School" suspension were automatically referred to their counselors for review. The counselor completed a status evaluation report, and based on the findings, recommended an intervention program entry when necessary. Students referred to the alternative education program by two or more instructors were classified as potential dropouts.

Student progress and possible intervention program exit were based on the program coordinator's evaluations using the criteria listed below.

ACADEMIC STATUS (CREDITS)

1. Enrollment in summer school
2. Enrollment in night school
3. Enrollment in acceptable correspondence school

4. Passing GED Exam.

5. Passing course test for credit.

6. Entry into special education classes.

7. Administrative option.

ATTENDANCE STATUS -

1. Maintain minimum eighty percent (80%) attendance for one semester.

2. Credit reinstated by credit review procedure (absences judged escused).

3. Entry into homebound program.

BEHAVIORIAL STATUS

1. Counselor/Administrator recommendation report requesting reclassification.

2. Alternative education program exit and re-entry into regular classroom.

3. Peer counselor recommendation report in agreement with staff counselor report.

4. School service volunteer work of no less than twenty-five (25) hours in a semester time period.

The criteria set forth to determine intervention program exit were subjectively based on changing a student's negative situation to a positive situation.

Established objectives were met if the student dropout rate was reduced. The dropout rate of this school year was compared to the averagle rate of previous years to evaluate the program's effectiveness. In addition, students completed a survey evaluating the effectiveness of the dropout intervention program.

Research

Current literature suggests dropping out of school is usually preceded by irregular attendance and truancy (Deukmejian, 1982; Stanley, 1976: Spencer, Dunbar, Hall, 1976; DiPrete, 1981).

According to the National PTA study, each day some two and a half million enrolled students are absent from school and another two million are not even enrolled (Deukejian, 1982). Absenteeism rates of ten (10) to fifteen (15) percent are not uncommon in some urban areas, and some schools currently report absenteeism rates of thirty percent (30%) or higher (Deukmejian, 1982).

The most frequently cited reasons for absenteeism include illness, dislike or boredom with school, social adjustment problems, academic problems, family or personal business, influence of friends, lack of authority for enforcing attendance laws, and absence of parental concern or control (Deukmejian, 1982).

In 1980, Linda Bond, Senior Consultant to the Assembly Education Committee of California, stated that a recent report by the Auditor General's office indicated statewide truancy runs as high as twenty-nine percent (29%) in some areas. Only six percent (6%) could be attributed to illness (California State Office of Criminal Justice Planning, Sacramento, 1982).

The Research Services Division of the Phoenix Union High School District, Arizona stated that the highest percentages of student dropouts were attributed to attendance problems. Academic problems followed closely as the second highest category of student dropouts (Summary Report on Dropouts, 1982).

One of the major goals of society is to help its young people learn how to become productive citizens (Gillespie, 1974). Today, a high school education is considered to be a requirement for bringing this about, and is also necessary for becoming a productive adult. The increased demand for technical expertise only places a greater emphasis on the high school education and academic performance (Spencer, Dunbar, Hall, 1976).

The major causes of dropouts are behaviorial (DiPrete, 1981), academic (Stanley, 1976), and attendance (Deukejian, 1982; Stanley, 1976; Spencer, Dunbar, Hall, 1976). The interrelationship of attendance, behavior, and academic success or failure was examined in American high schools using a longitudinal study of over thirry thousand (30,000) sophomores and twenty-eight thousand (28,000) plus seniors (DiPrete, 1981). A summary of the findings indicates the elements to produce strong academic and behaviorial results were those that have a stable faculty, assign homework, discipline misbehaving students, and enforce more rules.

DiPrete (1981) contends that academic rules are similar in nature to those of behavior and attendance. Students who display a rebellious attitude through violations of academic rules will tend to be those with poor behavior and attendance. Teachers who enforce homework directives and provide encouragement to those students who do the work well, and pay attention in class, will have less disruptive behavior and attendance problems with which to deal. It is also reasonable to suppose that poor performance

can be expected due to a resultant decrease in classroom instruction. Therefore, poor performance academically can be a result, as well as, a stimulant of misbehavior and delinquency.

The results of DiPrete's study (1981) make it clear that while misbehavior varies with socio-economic background, the correlation is not particularly significant. Evidence was discovered that students from the lowest and the highest income families are more likely to get in trouble than are students from middle-income families (DiPrete, 1981). Students who get good grades, but whose families are from the lowest income group, are still motivated to misbehave although the rate is less than those from lower income families with poor grades. Students that appear from higher income families and have academic success misbehave disproportionally more often than those of the corresponding lower income group. Low-income students with well educated fathers also apparently have a somewhat stronger motivation to misbehave. Their rates of class-cutting are much higher than those of similarly disadvantaged children whose fathers have educations more in line with their income (DiPrete, 1981).

The socio-economic position of the family is not the most important family influence on misbehavior. The presence of both parents in the home has a stronger inhibiting effect on misbehavior (DiPrete, 1981). More important still is whether the parents keep track of their child's activities, both in and out of school (Summary Report Phoenix, 1982).

In DiPrete's analysis (1981) he shows a very powerful relationship

between academic performance and several forms of misbehavior. Misbehavior and its relationship to grades is not formed in high school, rather in an earlier course of life. While academic performance in secondary school has a relationship with misbehavior this is considered a minor effect. Present educational expectations have been found to be formed much later in the educational career than does a student's academic potential, and expectations are affected more strongly by misbehavior (DiPrete, 1981). The sophomores who misbehave tend to form lower educational expectations than those whose behavior conforms to the demands of authorities. To summarize this data it would be safe to contend that peer pressure and attention can suppress prior expectations, and even potential, if family conditions are not particularly demanding.

Current district date (Summary Report, 1984) indicates over seventy percent (70%) of all dropouts give academic problems or adult education preferences as the reason for dropping out. A closer inspection indicates the most frequently cited cause of academic problems is a lack of attendance causing loss of credit and failure, regardless of test performance.

Adult education preference date (Summary Report, 1984) indicates a strong tie to attendance, loss of credit, a feeling of being forced out, and perceived administrative harassment.

A program (Stanley, 1976) developed to assist schools in helping low-motivated students increase their attendance and motivation, reducing dropouts by enhancing student's self-concept and increasing their success experiences is of particular value due to its systematic

format. Stanley developed a student selection form, parental permission form, preparation for first encounter group format, conferences between group meetings, activities for group meetings, follow-up forms, reinforcement activities, and referral forms. Elements of these categories will be incorporated into this proposal with variations based on school population needs.

METHOD

It has been established that dropout rates in this particular school increased, and generally increasing everywhere. Using the previously established and defined "potential dropout" guidelines, the project coordinator set about to initiate the program.

The program coordinator with assistance from guidance personnel reviewed each student's permanent record file to establish a list of students who met the academic category by being two or more credits behind their class level.

The attendance department supplied a list of students who failed to maintain at least an 80% attendance rate. This list was based on attendance figures for the previous semester. Each student had missed at least eighteen days of school in one semester and was on a pace that would eventually lead to a mandatory loss of credit.

Administrative personnel provided the names of those students who had been suspended from school or placed in the in-school suspension program for the second time. Also those students who were referred to the alternative education program by two or more teachers were listed. These students met criteria established for potential dropout status in the behavioral category.

In all 638 students were involved in this study. There were 264 referred by guidance, 328 by attendance, and 46 by the administration. Every student in each category was

interviewed. Each interview covered the same information and each student received an overview of that information. Depending on the students' circumstances some information was covered in more depth. Each interview averaged forty minutes in duration.

Parental involvement was deemed vital to the program's success so the parents of students who where in the academic category and/or whose name appeared on two or more list were sent a letter. This letter described the student's situation, the program's goals, and the type of options being described in the interview session.

It must be noted that parental involvement meant extending flexible hours for appointment times. In this particular study the pre-school hours from 6:00 A.M. to 7:30 P.M. were particularily well received. The need for some evening appointments were necessary also. If there was no parental involvement the students were called in throughout the school day. Due to the length of each interview the teacher's permission was requested prior to the interview. If there was a problem with one teacher the interview was scheduled at a time when teacher approval was confirmed.

Each interview contained information regarding options available to each student's needs. Some students utilized their time inquiring about specific information that pertained to their unique situation, while others listened and responded by asking general questions about specific areas.

A credit review was discussed with the student. In this discussion recommendations were made on credit status and course selection. In some cases career questions became a focal point, and in others, the selection of appropriate courses or the method best suited to make-up a course for credit was the main point.

Career counseling was based on the results of an aptitude test. The test used was the General Aptitude Test Battery. Also recommended to supplement the test information were two inventories that surveyed interest and temperament. The two inventories utilized were the Strong Campbell Interest Inventory and the Temperament Values Inventory. This assessment battery helped create a portrait of the individuals skills and preferences. This information also helped guide the individual through academic and career selections. The local community college assessment center was the support agency that performed the actual testing and the program coordinator did the evaluations.

Many students involved in the academic interviews needed information on area night school specifics, such as location, course selection, registration proceedure, tuition, and course transfer regulations. Each student was given an overview of the district policy on this type of course make-up work.

The existence of Adult High School options was a reality of which many students had to be made aware. Much inaccurate

information by former students clouded an already tinted view by current students. A description of the adult high school process was reviewed with emphasis placed on the difference in learning styles utilized. Many current students considered dropping-out to enter the adult high school regimen in the naive befief that it is easier. Former students have stated a person could graduate sooner than in regular high school, which misled current students with a partial truth. The difference, it was explained, was in the style the adult high school used, which was competency based learning. A comparison and description of competency based learning was reviewed and how it was possible to earn credits at an accelerated rate with increased effort.

Requirements to earn a General Equivalency Diploma were discussed along with where and when the test could be taken. GED prep courses, pre-testing guidelines, and district policy regarding testing sites and dates were reviewed.

In the course of many interviews the program coordinator became aware of problems the school should refer to other agencies. At this time the students who either requested help or were considered in need of help were referred to their counselor for assistance, the agency and date were indicated on the intervention report.

Peer counseling was a major criteria identified by research in any intervention program. At this particular school and in this program peer counseling was offered to

any student who requested the service. The service was also recommended by the program coordinator to students who would benefit from the counseling. Those deemed most in need were the students in the behavioral category. All students, however, were offered the chance to participate. Selected students were assigned as models to create a positive reinforcement enviornment for other students. In this program student peer counselors helped participating students develop self-concepts, attitude, social awareness, and a better understanding of school policy and methods by which to enact change. Also, and perhaps most importantly, the students were able to relate their personal problems to a peer counselor at their own level with greater ease.

Each student in academic difficulty was offered three types of tutoring services at no cost. The first was an in-school, period of subject tutoring service offered for the first time and developed by the local volunteer arm of the school board. The student tutors were assigned to the program coordinator and awarded an elective credit. A peer tutor was able to earn as much as one full credit, but were assigned by the semester. These tutors were assigned to students identified as potential dropouts by definition in the academic category. The student had input into the frequency and length of time spent with the tutor. The academic category was determined to be the highest priority of help needed in the intervention program. These tutors

were sent to the student's class and requested the teachers input as to the skill deficiencies and recommendations for one to one activities. The teacher released the student to the tutor and sent them to the assigned tutoring area or kept them in the classroom for monitoring. The second tutoring operation was after school, one day per week, for a three hour session. The tutors were individuals in the National Honor Society who volunteered their time to anyone interested. These volunteers received no credit and rotated their services so each served once per month. The third program was that of adult volunteers who shared tutoring time with students on an as needed basis.

Progress reports in all categories were offered to students and parents on a weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly basis. These reports contained some or all of the following information: grades, behavior, attendance, and a summary of efforts enacted.

Employment assistance was discussed, and after review of circumstances, placement activities were optioned or delayed. Most situations deemed an academic solution but many academic choices depended on a vocational solution.

An overview fo computer guidance systems offering academic, career, and college information was discussed. Too frequently the type of student that was identified as a potential dropout did not obtain through regular channels the information provided by this type service, much less how to operate or utilize this type of system.

Career Education specialist for this district provided shadowing opportunities for high school students. An overview of the function, requirements and benefits from such a program were covered in each interview session.

Each interview was conducted with a checklist of the options described above. The checklist was part of a recommendation form developed by the program coordinator to facilitate communication between guidance, teachers, and administrators. The recommendation form could be utilized in the follow-up process also.

The form used was labled the Intervention Program Evaluation Report or IP report. This form contained data from six categories; they include the intervention program data. potential dropout classification category, intervention activities recommended, evaluation report, IP-exit recommendations, and a student questionaire.

Each of these sections served a vital purpose in the intervention process. The intervention program data section requested student's name, address, phone number, class schedule, mother and father's occupation, and the educational background of each parent. The educational background of the parents was important because research indicated a strong correlation between parental educational background and expectations of the student regarding performance and education.

The potential dropout classification category provided

information in academic, attendance, and behavioral status areas. Academic status indicated grade, credits to date, credits the student should have had, current grade point average, projected year of graduation, best and poorest subjects. The attendance status area had the number of absences to date, number of possible days for attendance, percentage of attendance, and number of days absent both excused and unexcused. Behavioral status included any counselor-student contact or any administrative referrals via in-school suspension, out of school suspension, or alternative education placement.

The section called intervention activities recommended, was a checklist of possible solutions either recommended by the program coordinator or selected by the student. In the academic area possible solutions offered were: tutoring, night school, summer school, correspondence school, course test, GED, homebound program, adult high school, and a category of "other". The attendance area generally offered parental contact as a solution with a choice of frequency. The section also listed most frequent reason cited for absence, whether a loss of credit due to absence has occurred, present percentage of attendance, parental contact phone number, letter sent to notify parent of student's absentee rate, and a category listed as "other". The behavioral category had peer counseling, employability skills training, special education screening, cooperative education options, employment,

aptitude testing, career speaker lectures, agency referral (i.e. drug abuse, HRS), career research using a computer, and a category listed as "other".

In the evaluation report section the evaluator was identified along with his title. The academic section asked what steps were being undertaken to correct the problem, and the projected date of completion. The attendance section stated the previous attendance rate, present rate, any loss of credit incurred, whether or not credit had been reinstated with date and subject, and if more parental contact was needed. The behavioral category listed pre-IP administrative consultations, post-IP administrative consultations, alternative education entry and exit dates, in-school suspension dates, out of school suspension dates, special education testing dates and entry verification, cooperation education entry dates with employment data, career research project title, aptitude testing at what location with dates and evaluator's name, agency referral with date and contact person.

The intervention program exit recommendation section was the program coordinator's review of exit status. To exit the student had to have adequatley recovered a loss of credit and be back on graduation schedule. The student could have demonstrated an acceptable attendance rate for one semester, or demonstrated in the program coordinator's opinion adequate, consistent, improvement. The student had to have graduated,

dropped out, or moved without notification to be terminated automatically from the program.

The final section was the student questionaire which asked the following questions: Has this program helped you to stay in school? If so please describe how? Are you going to graduate from high school? If so, what area of the intervention program helped you the most? What are your future plans? What suggestions would you make to improve this program? Has there been anyone involved in the intervention activities that you felt did not care if you graduated? If so, would you please describe what events occurred? Please list any comments that you would like to add regarding this program.

If the student withdrew before graduation, the exit interview form that dropouts must complete, was attached to the incomplete intervention evaluation report. Each student's intervention report was placed in their permanent records after follow-up data had been completed.

Students were interviewed after the initial session based on the program coordinator's evaluation. Basically the students who received the most attention through activities recommended were those who were interviewed in subsequent sessions. Many students when interviewed were technically classified as potential dropouts, however, their circumstances warrented no intervention so there was only the initial interview.

RESULTS

Dropout rates at this particular school decreased from 6.7% to 5.2% for an overall reduction of 1.5%. Because this figure represents only one school year, it did not necessarily reflect success or failure. The overall success will be determined after the data from a five-year span is compared with the previous five-year data. The program, however, can account for much success in the form of benefits the school received since its implementation.

There were 638 students or 29% of the school population identified as potential dropouts. The academic category identified 264 students and accounted for 41.4% of the total students categorized. Attendance criteria identified 328 students representing 51.4%; the behavioral section represented 46 students reflecting 7.2% of the total. These groups were not exclusive as some 67 students or 13.6% were listed in more than one category. In fact, 44 of the 46 behavioral referrals were also listed as academic or attendance referrals.

Twenty-one percent of the parents who received letters responded by participating in the interview process. Another 42% of the parents contacted the program coordinator by phone to ask questions regarding the program and its goals.

Sophomores accounted for 325 or 51% of the identified students. Juniors were accountable for a total of 201 or 31.5%, and seniors represented 112 or 17.5% of the students.

As a direct result of this study, a comprehensive tutoring

system was delveloped to help students in academic trouble. There were 103 peer tutors, 23 National Honor Society tutors and 5 adult tutors working at various times durning the year. Over 7,000 hours of service were documented from all three tutoring groups. Five hundred seventeen or 81% of the 638 students interviewed requested and received tutoring services.

The student quuestionaire indicated 61% of the participating students described the program a help to stay in school, 97% said they would graduate from high school, 66% said the academic activities assisted them the most while attendance represented 21% and behavioral accounted for 13%. Students listed future plans in the order of 41% were to continue their education; 35% work, 9% military, 7% were undecided and 1% did not respond or did not care. Seventy percent of the students in similar situations would offer activities sooner and with more frequency. Only 12% of the students polled felt there were persons involved with the intervention program who did not care if they graduated. It must be noted that 98% of those responses held that administrators wanted them to leave early. The most frequent comment regarding the program was to offer more alternatives to making up lost credits.

CONCLUSIONS

The community became more involved because of this program. Many parents responded to the intervention letters requesting their participation. Parents were impressed with the program's variety of activities, aggressive pursuit of their child's participation, and approved a program designed to identify and assist marginal students.

Administrators received district recognition for their support. They enjoyed having an alternative to offer in many behavioral situations that previously did not exist. The public relations consideration was also a benefactor utilized in school reports.

The guidance department was able to utilize new support programs such as peer counselors, tutoring programs and adult volunteers to help combat the collective problems. The guidance department emphasized prevention of the ultimate problem rather than curing it.

Teacher awareness of potential dropouts was increased by the identification of these special students. Teachers with marginal students were given support and options not previously available. If a student was considered a problem, the teacher referred the student to their guidance counselor who in turn, when the circumstances warrented, would refer them to activities available through the intervention program.

The program coordinator wrote two grant proposals requesting funds to initiate elements of the intervention

program. Both grant proposals were approved; one a Chapter II grant for $3,000.00 and the other, an Educational Improvement grant for $2,963.00. These funds will purchase the complete computer guidance system "CHOICES". This system will be used to help make students more aware of their many choices upon completion of high school.

The entire student body benefited the most from this program. Marginal students were aggressively selected to participate in activities designed to facilitate positive reinforcement in their area of concern. Other students were recruited to perform a worthy service for the school, utilizing their skills to perform a variety of tasks that assisted students.

Based on these conclusions, the pilot school considered the program a success. The rewards most beneficial to the school itself were the monetary grants and positive parental response.

Dropout rates will continue to be monitored over the next few years as the program is refined. Motivating factors will continue to be exmained in an effort to prevent as many dropouts as possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Other schools will become aware of this program through its presentation at district meetings. Through the introduction of this program a district committee will be proposed, to incorporate elements of the study at the individual schools.
2. Middle school personnel will be made aware of the program and it's potential application to their students, who may later fall into these categories. Early identification of these problem areas is necessary for ultimate success.
3. The entire faculty needs to be aware that early identification is a successful element in the marginal student's graduation from high school.
5. Statistical follow-up data will be provided to district level personnel as well as agencies directly contributing funding for program implementation.
6. Schools interested in reducing dropout rates should establish a committee composed of an occupational specialist, administrator, guidance counselor, teacher, and parent.
7. District leave allocated for the dissemination of program benefits to other districts.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVENTION PROGRAM DATA

Name _____ Father's Occupation _____

Address _____ Mother's Occupation _____

Educational background-Father(F)-Mother(M

Phone _____ SS# _____ Less than High School _____ Military _____

High School _____ Voc/Tech. School _____

Class schedule _____ 2-year college _____ Bus. school _____

_____ 4-year college _____ Other _____

_____ 5-year college _____ _____

_____ Over 5-year college _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

POTENTIAL DROPOUT CLASSIFICATION CATEGORY

ACADEMIC (CREDITS) STATUS

Grade _____ Credits ____

Credits should have ____

Current GPA _____

Graduation year _____

Best subject _____ _____

Poorest subject _____

_____ _____

ATTENDANCE STATUS

Number of absence to date _____

Number of possible days possible attendance _____

Percentage of attendance _____

Unexcused _____

Excused _____

BEHAVIORAL STATUS

Counselor referral ____

Alternative Education referral-subject

_____

_____

_____

ISS # _____

OSS # _____

INTERVENTION ACTIVITIES RECOMMENDED

ACADEMIC Q- 1 2 3 4

Tutoring _____

frequency _____

Night school _____

Summer school _____

Correspondence School ___

_____

Course test _____

pass _____ fail ____

subject _____

_____

GED ____ Pre-Test _____

Pass _____ fail _____

Homebound _____

Adult H.S. Info._____

SCC _____

WPVAHS_____

Mid-Fla. Tech._____

Other _____

_____

ATTENDANCE Q- 1 2 3 4

Reason for absence _____

_____

_____

Loss of Credit _____

subject _____

_____ _____

Credit reinstated _____

Date ____ Subj. _____

_____ _____

Present % of Abs. _____

Contract % _____

Need parent contact _____

daily _____

weekly _____

when? _____

Phone (F) w_____

(M) w_____

Letter sent re: Abs. ____

Other _____

BEHAVIORAL Q- 1 2 3 4

Peer Counseling _____

Employability skills ___

Spec. Ed. Testing _____

Co-op Program _____

Employment _____

Aptitude testing _____

results_____

Career Speaker _____

topic _____

_____ _____

Drug Abuse counseling

school _____

other _____

Family counseling _____

agency _____

Career Search (Choices)

_____

HRS _____

Other _____

EVALUATION REPORT

EVALUATOR _____ TITLE _____

ACADEMIC

What steps are now being undertaken to correct problem?_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

When is student prepared to finish?_____
_____
_____
_____

ATTENDANCE

Previous attendance rate. _____ %

Present attendance rate. _____ %

Loss of credits _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

Credits reinstated _____
Date _____ Subj._____
_____ _____
_____ _____

Parent contact needed?
_____

BEHAVIORAL

Pre-IP Admin. visits _
number _____
Post-IP Admin. visits _
number _____
Alternative Education
entry _____ exit _____
ISS-entry___ exit _____
OSS-out___return _____
Spec. Ed. _____
Co-op _____
Employment _____
where_____
hrs/wk._____
duties_____
Career search_____
subj._____
Aptitude testing - SCC
results_____
interest_____
temperment_____
Drug counseling_____
counselor_____
Family counseling _____
counselor_____
HRS _____
contact person_____
phone _____

IP-EXIT RECOMMENDATION

Satisfactory credits #_____
Satisfactory attendance _____ %
Graduation date _____
Withdrawal date _____ Code _____
Semester Review Satisfactory _____
_____
_____
Comments_____
_____

STUDENT QUESTIONAIRE

Has this program helped you stay in school?_____
Please explain your reply_____
_____
_____
Are you going to graduate from High School? _____
What area helped to the most? Academic____Why_____
Attendance_____ Why_____ Behavioral_____Why _____
_____
What are your future plans?_____
_____
How would you help others in similar situations?_____
_____
Has there been anyone who gave you the impression they did not care if you graduate?_____ Explain?_____
_____
Please list any comments you have regarding this program?_____
_____
_____

(TO BE FILLED OUT BY A COUNSELOR ON ALL WITHDRAWALS NOT TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER SCHOOL)

STUDENT'S NAME _____

SCHOOL _____ S.S. # _____

PERMANENT ADDRESS _____
Street Town State

TELEPHONE _____ AGE _____ SEX RACE CODE _____

1. Date of attendance at this school. Date entered _____ Grade level _____
   Date withdrew _____ Grade level _____

2. Student's principal means of support during this school year. ☐ parents ☐ relatives ☐ self-supporting ☐ other

3. Where is the student living at the time of his leaving school? ☐ with parents ☐ relatives ☐ with spouse
   ☐ by himself ☐ with friends ☐ other

4. Is the student presently employed? ☐ Yes ☐ No If affirmative, the firm's name and address and brief description of duties. _____
   Firm's Name Address
   _____
   Duties

5. Is the student presently seeking employment? ☐ Yes ☐ No If affirmative, what type of employment? _____

6. Has the student been interviewed by the school's occupational specialist? ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Is the student aware of the programs offered at Seminole Community College? ☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Is the student aware of a diploma he might receive through GED? ☐ Yes ☐ No

9. Student's reason for leaving school. You may check several. ☐ military ☐ full-time employment ☐ many friends quitting
   ☐ marriage ☐ no longer interest ☐ educational goal completed ☐ medical ☐ excessive absence ☐ pregnancy
   ☐ overage for grade ☐ other ☐ suitable programs not available (please specify) _____

10. As a whole how does the student feel about his experience at this institution? ☐ like it very much ☐ like it pretty well
    ☐ disliked it very much ☐ disliked it more than liked it ☐ neither liked or disliked
    Courses that he felt to be most beneficial to him. _____
    Courses that he felt to be least beneficial to him. _____

11. How could this school have encouraged this student to remain in school?
    ☐ offer more courses or programs in _____
    ☐ offer more counseling services
    ☐ give students more opportunity to participate in extra curricular activities
    ☐ reduce the size of classes
    ☐ other (please specify) _____
    ☐ reduce cost of activities, supplies and fees
    ☐ provide more information about jobs & careers
    ☐ offer more opportunities to become involved in co-op programs

12. Does the student plan to return to school in the near future? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If affirmative, the type of program he plans to enter: ☐ return to this institution at a future date ☐ community college
    ☐ other program in the county ☐ night school ☐ vocational-technical school ☐ college or university ☐ other

13. Counselor assessment of the student's reason for withdrawal. _____

SDS 267 (9-78) Counselor _____ Date _____